

Drivers should be taught how to effectively adjust the outside mirrors and how to use them, as well as how to acquire habits for using the rearview mirror. *A proper adjustment of the outside mirrors should give the driver a view of the side of the vehicle*, which will allow the driver to detect a child approaching the vehicle. Do not tilt the mirror adjustment outward preventing a view of the side of the vehicle as is recommended by some. And, if add-on convex mirrors are placed in the lower outside corner of each mirror, the viewing angle will be greatly increased. Speed must be at a slow walking pace. By continuous use of all three mirrors (or, the outside mirrors and a backup camera), and with a slow movement, the driver will be able to see anyone wandering into the vehicle's backing path.

Even when a vehicle has a backup camera, drivers must develop these four habits to help avoid the tragedy that the Gulbransen's, as well as hundreds of other families each year, have experienced.

1. Check to the front and rear of the vehicle before entering it.
2. Back at a slow walking pace.
3. Check the outside mirrors and the inside mirror (or, backup camera) continuously, in this sequence, with no more than one-second pauses: rear, passenger side, rear, driver side, rear, passenger side, rear, driver side, etc, until the vehicle is stopped. When the vehicle is equipped with a backup camera, substitute the views of the rearview mirror with views of the backup monitor along with the use of the outside mirrors.
4. If you feel any resistance to the rolling of the vehicle, STOP MOVING! Secure the vehicle, and check to see what is impeding your movement. Stopping may make the difference between broken bones or fatal internal injuries to a toddler.

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For more information, and Awareness and Car Control coaching, go to: NIDBCollege.org